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ABSTRACT

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) originated in association with the development of a course to train teachers in specific techniques for teaching reading and the use of a wide range of multisensory reading materials. The major objective of the IMC project was to supply teachers with a wide variety of useful instructional materials for specific skills geared to the one basal reading series that was adopted for all inner-city schools in the Minneapolis Public School System. At all points the teachers took an active role in designing the materials to meet the specific needs of educationally disadvantaged children in the Minneapolis area. Of the 240 teachers who had the opportunity to use the IMC's resources, 98 percent did. Before the beginning of the 1970-71 school year, the center had to extend their operation day to sixteen hours to meet the demand. Informal opinions and surveys have indicated that the IMC is a beneficial factor in improving reading instruction. (Author/WR)

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Instructional Materials Center
Project Director's Report
1969-70

A Title I ESEA Project

Mitchell D. Trockman

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Minneapolis Public Schools
Research Division
Office of Research, Development
and Federal Programs
807 N. E. Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

December 1970

Instructional Materials Center
1969-70

Summary

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) primarily serves Title I elementary schools located in the decentralized North and South Pyramids of the Minneapolis Public School System. The IMC originated in association with the development of a course to train teachers in specific techniques for teaching reading and the use of a wide range of multi-sensory reading materials.

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The major objective of the IMC project was to supply teachers with a variety of useful instructional materials for specific skills geared to the one basal reading series that was adopted for all inner-city schools. A wide range of materials designed to teach each reading skill was available. For students who do not learn best with auditory aids, there were visual and kinesthetic materials. At all points the teachers took an active role in designing the materials to meet the specific needs of educationally disadvantaged children in the Minneapolis area.

See Pages 6,8

The Instructional Materials Staff included a project director to administer and coordinate the IMC, a reading specialist to provide leadership in the development of instructional materials along with supervising instructional aspects of the reading program, a clerk-typist, and an offset press operator.

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As evidenced by the extensive use made of the IMC, apparently the teachers felt the materials were very useful. Of the 240 teachers who had the opportunity to use the IMC's resources, 98% did! Before the beginning of the 1970-71 school year, the center had to extend their operation day to 16 hours to keep up with the demand. Informal opinions and surveys have been very encouraging.

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About this report. . . . . .

All evaluation reports prepared by the Research Division of the Minneapolis Public Schools follow the procedures and format described in Preparing Evaluation Reports, A Guide for Authors, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Readers who are familiar with these Evaluation Reports may wish to skip the first two sections describing the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Public Schools since these descriptions are standard for all reports.

Ideas expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Minneapolis Public School Administration nor the Minneapolis School Board.

The City of Minneapolis

The program described in this report was conducted in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Minneapolis is a city of 432,000 people[1] located on the Mississippi River in the southeastern part of Minnesota. With its somewhat smaller twin city, St. Paul, it is the center of a seven county metropolitan area of over 1,865,000, the largest population center between Chicago and the Pacific Coast. As such it serves as the funneling point for the entire Upper Midwest region of the country.

The city, and its surrounding area, has long been noted for the high quality of its labor force. Typically, the unemployment rate in Minneapolis is lower than in other major cities, possibly due to the variety and density of industry in the city as well as to the high level capability of its work force. The unemployment rate in May of 1970 was 3.2%, compared with a 5.5% national rate for the same month. As the economic center of a prosperous region, rich in such natural resources as forests, minerals, water power and productive agricultural land, Minneapolis attracts commerce and workers from throughout the Upper Midwest Region. Many residents are drawn from the neighboring states of Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska and the Dakotas as well as from the farming areas and the Iron Range region of outstate Minnesota.

More Minneapolitans work in clerical and sales jobs than in any other occupation. Reflecting its position as a major wholesale-retail center and a center for banking, finance and insurance, three out of ten residents work in clerical and sales occupations. Almost as many (27%) are employed as craftsmen, foremen and operatives, and one out of five members of the work force are professionals, technicians, managers, and officials. Fewer than one out of five (17%) workers are employed in laboring and service occupations.

Minneapolis city government is the council-dominated type. Its mayor, elected for a 2 year term, has limited powers. Its elected city council operates by committee, and engages in administrative as well as legislative action.

Minneapolis is not a crowded city. While increasing industrial development has occupied more and more land, population has declined steadily from a peak of 522,000 in 1950. The city limits have not been changed since 1927. Most homes are sturdy, single family dwellings built to withstand severe winters. Row homes are practically non-existent, even in low income areas. In 1960, 53% of the housing in Minneapolis was owner-occupied.

Most Minneapolitans are native born Americans, but about 35,000 (7%) are foreign born. Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, and Canadians comprise most of the foreign born population.

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[1] 1970 Census estimate

Few non-white citizens live in Minneapolis, although their numbers appear to be increasing. In 1960, only 3 percent of the population was non-white, but it is expected that the 1970 census will reveal that this figure has doubled. About 80% of the non-whites are Black Americans, with most of the remaining non-white population being Indian American, typically Chippewa or Sioux. Only a small number of residents from Spanish-speaking or Oriental origins live in the city. In general, the non-white families are larger than white families. In 1960, non-white residents made up 3.2% of the city's population, but accounted for 7.8% of the children in the city's elementary schools.

Minneapolis has not yet reached the stage of many other large cities in terms of the level of social problems. It has been relatively untouched by racial disorders or by student unrest. Crime rates are below national averages. Mounting concern over law and order, however, is evidenced by the recent election of Mayor Charles Stenvig, a former police detective.

One's first impression is that Minneapolis doesn't really have serious problems of blight and decay. But the signs of trouble are evident to one who looks beyond the parks and lakes and tree-lined streets. As with many other large cities, the problems are focused in the core city and are related to increasing concentrations there of the poor, many of them non-whites, and the elderly. For example, 9 out of 10 Black Americans in Minneapolis live in just one-tenth of the city's area. While Minneapolis contains 13% of the state's population, it supports 28% of the state's AFDC families.

There has been a steady migration to the city by Indian Americans from the reservations and poor whites from the small towns and rural areas of Minnesota. They come to the "promised land" of Minneapolis looking for a job and a better way of life. Some make it, many do not. In 1957, the city supported 1 out of 10 of the state's Indian Americans who were on relief; in 1969 the city supported 3 out of 10. The Indian American population is generally confined to the same small geographic areas as the Black Americans. Estimates of their unemployment rate vary, but range as high as 60%. These same areas of the city have the lowest median incomes in the city, and the highest concentrations of dilapidated housing, welfare cases, and juvenile delinquency.

The elderly are also concentrated in the central city. In 1960, Minneapolis had the greatest percentage (13%) of persons over age 65 among the 30 largest cities in the country. The elderly, like the 18-24 year old young adults, live near the central city because of the availability of less expensive housing in multiple-unit dwellings. Younger families have continued to migrate toward the outer edges of the city and surrounding suburban areas.

These few facts about Minneapolis have been presented to help give you some feeling for the locality in which this program took place. Possibly these names can add additional life to the description: Honeywell, Billy Graham, Minnesota Vikings, Guthrie Theatre, Betty Crocker (General Mills), Minnesota Twins, Pillsbury, University of Minnesota, Minnehaha Falls, Minnesota Symphony, and Hubert Humphrey. These are representative of Minneapolis, the City of Lakes.

The Minneapolis Schools

About 77,000 children go to school in Minneapolis. Most of them, about 68,000, attend one of the city's 97 public schools; 9,000 attend parochial or private schools.

The Minneapolis Public Schools, headed by Dr. John B. Davis, Jr., who became Superintendent in 1967, consist of 68 elementary schools (kindergarten-6th grade), 15 junior high schools (grades 7-9), 9 high schools (grades 10-12), 2 junior-senior high schools, and 4 special schools. Over 3,600 certificated personnel are employed. Control of the public school system ultimately rests with the seven member School Board. These non-salaried officials are elected by popular vote for staggered six year terms. The Superintendent serves as the Board's executive officer and professional adviser, and is selected by the Board.

The system's current operating budget for 1970 is approximately $62,500,000, up from $54,100,000 in 1969 and $48,800,000 in 1968. Per pupil costs were $587.00 in 1969, up from $481.00 in 1968. The range of per pupil costs in the state for 1969 was from $321.00 - $942.00. The median expenditure for school districts in the seven-county metropolitan area was $564.00[2] Close to 40¢ of each local property tax dollar goes for school district levies. The School Board is a separate governmental agency which levies its own taxes and sells its own bonds. Minneapolis also receives federal funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For the 1968-1969 school year, these funds amounted to approximately $4.3 million dollars.

One of the Superintendent's goals has been to achieve greater communication among the system's schools through decentralization. Consequently, two "pyramids" or groups of geographically related schools have been formed. First to be formed, in 1967, was the North Pyramid, consisting of North High School and the elementary and junior highs which feed into it. In a similar manner, the South-Central Pyramid was formed, in 1969, around South and Central High Schools. There is a director for each pyramid, as well as advisory groups of principals, teachers, and parents. The goals of the pyramid structure are to effect greater communication among schools and between schools and the community, to develop collaborative and cooperative programs, and to share particular facilities and competencies of teachers.

In 1969 there were 20 elementary schools, 5 junior highs, 3 senior highs, and 12 parochial schools serving children in areas eligible for programs funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The federal criteria for selecting these schools are based on economic factors, in particular the number of families receiving AFDC and/or having incomes under $2,000. Approximately 22,000 children attend

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[2]Per pupil cost is the adjusted maintenance cost from state and local funds and old federal programs, exclusive of transportation, per pupil unit in average daily attendance for the 1968-69 school year. Source of these figures is Minnesota Education Association Circular 6970-C2, Basic Financial Data of Minnesota Public School Districts, February, 1970.

these schools. Of that number, one-third are defined by the State Department of Education as educationally disadvantaged, i.e. one or more grade levels behind in basic skills such as reading and arithmetic. Federal programs are concentrated on the educationally disadvantaged group.

Based on sight counts, the proportion of Black American pupils for 1969-70 was 8.1%. Five years ago the proportion was 5.4%. Indian American children currently comprise 2.7% of the school population, approximately double the proportion of 5 years ago. The proportion of minority children in the various elementary schools generally reflects the prevailing housing pattern found in each school area. Although some non-white pupils are enrolled in every elementary school, non-white pupils are concentrated in two relatively small areas of the city. Of the 68 elementary schools, 10 have more than 30% non-white enrollment and 4 of these have over 50%. There are no all-black schools nor all-white schools. Thirty-nine elementary schools have non-white enrollments of less than 5%.

The proportion of school age children in AFDC homes has increased from approximately 12% in 1962 to 17% in 1969. In 10 elementary schools, 30% or more of the pupils are from homes participating in AFDC programs.

Turnover rate is the percent of students that come in new to the school or leave the school at some time during the school year (using the September enrollment as a base figure). While the average turnover rate for the city in 1968-1969 was about 60%, this figure varied widely according to location. Target area schools generally experienced a much higher turnover rate; five of these schools had rates of 100% or greater. Eleven Minneapolis schools had turnover rates of 45% or less.

Schools and Neighborhood Served by the Instructional Materials Center

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) has primarily served the area of the Minneapolis Public Schools known as the North and South-Central Pyramids; the two Pyramid groups of geographically related schools which form decentralized administrative units of the Minneapolis Public School system. The Pyramid areas contain Title I elementary schools and several parochial schools. As of June 1970, Center materials were used by approximately 240 teachers in the Minneapolis and area parochial schools.

Concurrent to the IMC's program during fiscal year 1970, the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory has conducted a reading program in the John Hay Elementary School, which is located in the North Pyramid. A second project, known as the Basic Skills Centers which employ "talking typewriters," has served students from both the North and South-Central Pyramids.

Historical Background

The physical entity known as the Instructional Materials Center, was started in late August, 1969. Official hours of operation during the first eleven months were, 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., 5 days a week. To keep up with the level of service felt necessary by the IMC staff, many weekends were consumed. In preparation for the start of the 1970-71 school year, the IMC hours shifted to a 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. day during the twelfth month of operation.

As every teacher knows, many children's learning and behavior problems stem from poor reading skills. In 1967, a Minneapolis teacher's committee, composed of inner-city elementary school teachers, identified reading instruction as the main area in which they needed help.

Teachers were also concerned about the many different reading instruction methods in inner-city elementary schools in Minneapolis. Some 22 different systems for teaching reading were found among 20 inner-city elementary schools. Inconsistency in reading programs was especially hard on inner-city children, who move frequently during the school year. While children who move a great deal often stay in the same general area, they may attend several different schools within the same year. In an effort to provide some continuity for these children, and to provide a basis for more effective instructional materials development in reading, teachers from inner-city schools selected one basal reading series to be used in all their schools.

Teacher interest in reading instruction resulted in an inservice teacher training course to (1) train teachers in specific techniques for teaching reading and (2) train teachers to use a wide range of multi-sensory reading instruction materials. This course was also funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Teachers and staff of the Office of Research, Development, and Federal Programs worked for one year to design the course. Teachers identified their practical day-to-day problems in teaching reading and examined possible alternatives for dealing with such problems. It was up to teachers to decide which problems and solutions would be emphasized in the course.

Objectives

The teacher-training course, in turn, led to development of the Instructional Materials Center (IMC). The job of the IMC is to produce materials which teachers have designed or learned to use in the course. The objective is to supply teachers with a variety and quantity of useful instructional materials for specific skills geared to the single-adoption reading system in use. The ultimate goal of the Title I Pyramid Reading Program which includes the training course and the related IMC- is to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children. This project is supported primarily by funds from Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and is supplemented by local funds.

Personnel

Added to the staff of the Minneapolis Public Schools on a permanent, full-time basis during fiscal year 1970, were an Assistant Elementary Principal on special assignment as Project Director for the IMC, a Clerk-Typist and an Offset Press Operator. A Reading Specialist was privately contracted to supervise instructional aspects of the project, including development of instructional materials.

The Director was charged with the responsibility of administrating and coordinating the Instructional Materials Center. The scope of his administrating and responsibilities included such items as: writing specifications for equipment and supplies; coordinating remodeling of physical facilities; training clerical employees in operation of graphic art equipment; setting project priorities; establishing production schedules; preparing projected budgets and monitoring spending within assigned dollar amounts.

A major responsibility of the Director was coordinating the production of the Center with the needs of the Reading Specialist in the area of staff development, research, and development of new materials.

The Reading Specialist performed the function of many people. Her responsibilities included coordinating staff development and workshops; visiting classrooms both on an invitational basis from teacher and/or principal or just "dropping in;" demonstrating techniques and materials to individual teachers and small groups of teachers during the school day; writing and developing materials needed by teachers; coordinating teams of teachers in writing new materials; developing materials for the Summer School Reading Program in the target area of Minneapolis.

An initial assignment performed by the Reading Specialist was to act as a consultant to a large committee of teachers who were working on the adoption of reading materials for children in Grades 4, 5 and 6.

The Reading Specialist also worked with the IMC Project Director in establishing production priorities.

Among the responsibilities assigned to the Clerk-Typist were the tasks of being receptionist; handling correspondence, payroll and supplies. Under the direction of the Director and Reading Specialist, the Clerk-Typist also prepared press-ready copy using various types of graphic art equipment such as photo type composing machine, typewriter etc. The Clerk-Typist assisted in filling orders for materials from teachers and kept a detailed inventory of all materials placed in classrooms.

The Offset Press Operator operated the printing and binding equipment; assisted in shipping prepared materials; maintained an inventory of raw materials; and trained several Neighborhood Youth Corps members in the operation of an offset printing press.

Assistance also was rendered by Neighborhood Youth Corps members and other teachers and clerical people assigned on a temporary basis for short periods of time.

Each staff member had special qualifications and training which allowed for an immediate start-up of the Instructional Materials Center without the need to train or "break-in."

The Director had been a teacher, an assistant principal, and had performed several miscellaneous administrative functions during previous school years. He had an extensive background in graphic arts, equipment procurement and operation.

The Reading Specialist had coordinated a similar, but smaller scale operation, in Clovis, California. She had been a classroom teacher at several levels; a curriculum coordinator; an elementary principal; student teacher supervisor; college instructor; and author of reading materials.

The Clerk-Typist brought to the project many years of clerical experience and rapidly became proficient in the operation of new types of equipment.

The Offset Press Operator had had formal training and was experienced in the operation of highspeed printing presses and miscellaneous binding and graphic art equipment.

Both the Clerk-Typist and Offset Press Operator positions were difficult to fill. These positions were established above the normal entry level and hence required fully experienced employees rather than trainees.

Much supplementary service was given to the IMC by the professional and clerical staff of the Department of Research, Development and Federal Projects of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The Assistant Director of the department was instrumental in the original formation of the project. She had worked with teachers, principals, and others since 1967 in planning the Title I Reading Program of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Training

A major function of the IMC has been to support teachers who have been trained in specific methodology.

Without the intense pre-service and in-service training of teachers and para-professionals, the IMC would be merely a print shop.

Dr John Manning, of the University of Minnesota, teaches the in-service course, which was first offered during the summer of 1968 for 84 teachers. Approximately 125 teachers took a similar course during the summer of 1969.

Teachers had a choice of receiving academic credit or stipends. One-hundred forty teachers enrolled in the course during Fall 1969, and the same number in Spring 1970. Seventy teachers enrolled in Summer 1970. Parochial school teachers also participate. Title I funds supported this training program.

The course emphasizes practical help for teachers. Course instructors teach demonstration lessons to children selected by participating teachers from their own classrooms. Four broad areas are covered.

1. effective initial instruction in reading for disadvantaged boys and girls.

2. practical classroom methods for diagnosing reading disabilities.

3. classroom methods and materials for treating specific reading difficulties.

4. general principles and classroom methods of helping children with severe reading disabilities.

Materials development is one of the most important aspects of the course. A whole range of materials has been designed to teach each reading skill. For children who do not learn best with auditory aids, there are many materials which utilize a child's visual and tactile senses. Teachers take an active role in constructing materials during the course.

During the school year, the Reading Specialist spent most of her time in following up formal training sessions by working directly with teachers, aides and children.

She responded to every request initiated by teachers or building principals.

The Reading Specialist also worked with resource teachers in their schools.

Project Operations

The period covered by this report is mid-August, 1969, through the end of July 1970. This period covers the entire time the Instructional Materials Center has been functioning. The Pyramid Title I Reading Program, of which the IMC is a component, has been in existence since Summer 1968.

The Instructional Materials Center is located in the George J. Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Gordon Center also serves as the administrative headquarters for the North Pyramid and provides overload space for Willard Elementary School. The building is widely used by teachers and the total community beyond the defined school day.

Between August 1969 and June 1970 approximately 1,000 square feet was used by the IMC. In June 1970 the space allocation was doubled to help alleviate a serious space problem.

None of the materials introduced by the IMC are available from commerical publishers. A basic rationale for the inception of the IMC was the need for materials tailored to the specific needs of disadvantaged readers in the target area of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

To produce the materials, equipment was procured which would allow for an efficient low cost operation. Major items are: an offset press; camera for making plates; processing unit to develop plates; power paper cutter; semi-automatic collator; photo type composing machine. The Center uses other equipment commonly found in a printing operation, such as: a light table; waxer; typewriters; and a padding press. The initial capitalization of equipment was approximately $12,000.

Main activities of the project have been writing, producing and distributing reading materials. The activities have been directly related to the major objective, which is to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children in the primary grades of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Budget

The responsibility for expenditures of monies has been divided. The Director of the IMC is responsible for funds needed for materials reproduction and distribution. The Educational Directors of the North and South-Central Pyramids have been responsible for the monies devoted to the training of teachers and para-professionals in the area of reading.

Most of the funding has come from Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (PL 89-10).

The IMC was funded for the 1970 fiscal year with $24,172. These funds were restricted to salaries. At the end of fiscal year 1969, approximately $12,000 was allocated for the purchase of equipment and $3,900 was set aside for consumable supplies.

With the constant expansion of services provided by the IMC, the initial dollar amount budgeted for fiscal year 1970 became inadequate. Approximately $4,000 of North and South-Central Pyramid funds were made available by the respective Directors.

Late in fiscal year 1970, additional Title I money was added to the project through an Addendum to the original budget. An additional $2,625 was allocated for clerical assistance and about $15,000 was added for supplies, to be used for the on-going program, development of new materials and preparation of materials for the 1970-71 school year.

The Addendum also contained about $20,000 for tuition payments, stipends and salaries to be used for training additional teachers and writing new materials.

Funds allocated during fiscal year 1969 and 1970 represent mainly "start-up" funds. The equipment will have a life of several years, and training expenses should decrease as a level is reached where most teachers are familiar with the methods involved in the reading program for disadvantaged readers.

In a large city school system, such as Minneapolis, many primary grade teachers are replaced yearly for a wide variety of reasons. New teachers will have to receive pre-service and in-service training in the "methods."

Looking at the total fiscal year 1970, adequate Title I funds were provided. For a period of time prior to the first Addendum of 1970, local funds were needed to supplement supplies on hand which remained from fiscal year 1969.

Parent-Community Involvement

Parents were involved indirectly in the planning of this project. Through Parent Teachers Associations and Pyramid advisory committees, parents had expressed their desire that improvement in the reading program for their children be made. The Title I Pyramids Reading Program, of which the Instructional Materials Center is an important part, evolved from this parental concern.

After initial plans for the project were made, much effort was exerted to inform the community about the IMC and its role as part of the total Title I Reading Program.

A publication was written by the Reading Specialist specifically for distribution to parents of kindergarten children. This booklet described the reading readiness program and suggested games and skill improvement methods the parents could follow. A set of letter flash cards was included in the booklet.

Results

Is the IMC a successful project? YES! Of the over 240 classroom teachers who could have ordered materials, ninety-eight (98%) did. The enthusiasm created when teachers started with the training program, continues.

Several informal questionnaires and opinion surveys and evaluations have been made. The response has been overwhelmingly encouraging.

Currently the Department for Research, Development and Federal Projects is looking at evidence to help evaluate actual results in the reading skills of target area children whose teachers have been participants in the training courses and have been using materials provided by the IMC. Actual data will be published and made available when compiled.

Dissemination and Communications

Catherine Watson, a staff writer for the Minneapolis Tribune wrote a feature article early in the 1969-70 school year about the IMC. A copy of this article is included in the Appendix.

News releases have been issued to all local media about the IMC. Copies of these releases are attached.

A booklet entitled Title I Reading Program is available. Enough copies are being printed to insure distribution to concerned individuals and agencies. Copies will be offered to schools for use with PTA and other community groups.

During October 1969, an open house was held for both the general and school community of the Twin City area. Nearly 400 individuals toured the facility that day. Since the open house, over a hundred groups and individuals have visited the IMC. Teams from school systems as distant as Texas and California have visited.

Dr. John Manning and Mrs. Alberta Brown, the Reading Specialist, made a presentation about the Title I Reading Program at the 1970 International Reading Association Convention.

Mitchell Trockman, the IMC Director, has prepared a slide sequence which has been used with several groups of educators and interested parents and community.

Further verbal presentation of the project can be made by Mitchell Trockman. Mrs. Alberta Brown, Dr. John Manning, and Mrs. Mary Kasbohm, Assistant Director of the Office of Research, Development and Federal Programs, may be contacted for details about instructional aspects of the reading program.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project should be continued and expanded along the current lines of operation. Additional space will be needed for the IMC operation as production is increased.

Currently, new materials such as audio cassettes and overhead projector transparencies are in the development state. Additional equipment will be required to produce these items if adopted as part of the project.

The attitude of parents, teachers and the community towards the improvement of the basic skill of reading has been very encouraging.

Cost of materials produced in the IMC are considerably less than if produced commercially.

Great flexibility has been achieved by the training and logistical support components working together.

Appendix A

News Releases

News Release from the Minneapolis Public Schools

An Instructional Materials Center, serving the North and South-Central Pyramid schools, is opening at Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Avenue North in Rooms 200 and 202. An outgrowth of the new unified reading program in the Pyramid schools in Minneapolis, the Center's principal concern will be the production of supplementary reading materials. Principal funding for the project is through Title I Federal Funds.

Concentrating on materials for grades kindergarten-3 this fall, the production center will expand to include intermediate grade materials when a new reading textbook series is adopted for those grades later this year, with possible future expansion into other curriculum areas planned.

Heading the Materials Center is Mitchell Trockman, formerly assistant principal at Willard School. He visited three California school districts this summer where similar centers are presently in operation, to gain background information prior to opening the new center. Photo-offset equipment will be used in the production of printed materials.

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An Equal Opportunity Employer

NEWS release from the Minneapolis Public Schools

School-Community Relations and Public Information • 807 N. E. Broadway 55413 • 332-4284 Ext. 392

Release: Immediate
August 8, 1969

Three California school districts were visited this summer to gain background information prior to establishing an Instructional Materials Center for the Minneapolis Public Schools. Cities visited were Clovis, Fresno and Huntington Beach, California.

Mitchell Trockman, former Willard assistant principal, will be the director of an Instructional Materials Center. It is to be located in the Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Avenue North.

The new Instructional Materials Center, which will produce and supply supplementary reading materials for primary grade teachers (K-3), will be opened in September. The Center will serve all the schools in the North and South-Central Pyramids.

Trockman said one of the most interesting facilities he viewed was Huntington Beach, California. He described the Center as an open space which was set up in super-market style. Teachers used shopping baskets and moved up and down the aisles past shelves which include such materials as audio tapes, study prints, models, specimans and other curricular materials. After the selections are made, teachers either sign materials out or have a parent volunteer sign them out. The materials are then boxed and shipped to the teachers' classrooms. The Center is open from early morning to late in the afternoon and is also open one evening in the week, according to Trockman.

The Center will be funded by a combination of Title I and Pyramid monies. Present plans call for an expansion of the Center's services in the future.

The Minneapolis Tribune

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1969

Instructional Materials Center Makes Reading Aids for Schools

By CATHERINE WATSON
Minneapolis Tribune
Staff Writer

To talk about the Minneapolis Public Schools' new Instructional Materials Center (IMC), you first have to get over its name.

It sounds like a warehouse, but it is more like a print-shop, and it makes materials that teachers used to have to make themselves — everything from vocabulary flash cards to spelling games.

The IMC, in its first year in Minneapolis, is being used as an aid to teachers in primary grades in the inner city, specifically in 19 elementary schools which feed students into the North, South and Central high-school districts.

"Some suburbs around the country have what they call IMCs," said the Minneapolis center's youthful director Mitchell Trockman. "Those have audio-visual materials, library books and supplies and places for teachers to work. But almost all are lacking one component — a place to make materials.

"We're starting at that end — and later we hope to make it more glamourous."

At present the center is more crowded than glamorous, with printing and binding equipment, tables of word cards and Trockman and his three-person staff in two rooms of the Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Av. N.

The IMC is growing so fast it is already spilling into the upstairs hall. Supported partly by federal and partly by local funds, the center budget is $32,000 this year.

Minneapolis Tribune Photo by Mike Zerby

IMC DIRECTOR MITCHELL TROCKMAN
Amid vocabulary cards printed by the center

The materials printed in the center are all related to a reading program underway in the 19 schools. The reading program, run by Dr. John Manning of the University of Minnesota, teaches teachers how to teach reading better.

It works, according to early results, and is popular enough that some teachers from other schools actually sneak into the once-a-week sessions.

Teachers in all 19 schools agreed during summer seminars to use the same basic reading textbooks.

This is a special aid to inner-city pupils. The inner-city schools have a high rate of student turnover during the year, but although pupils may leave one inner city school, they usually don't leave the inner city itself.

Under the new program, where each primary reading class uses the same book, a pupil could transfer mid-year from a North-Side school to a South-Side one in the inner city, without having to struggle with a different reading book.

"Manning says reading is basically decoding," Trockman said. "He tells teachers that one reason kids aren't learning to read is that teachers aren't using the proper techniques. Then he shows them the techniques.

"He says that when teachers have the correct techniques to teach reading, they must also have the proper materials. That's where we come in."

The IMC is "saving teachers from spending hours at home on their own reading materials," Trockman said.

It also helps beginning teachers, many of whom are stationed in the inner-city schools. These teachers may not have been on the job long enough to develop their own sets of helpful materials. Through the IMC, which is publishing tried-and-true materials that teachers recommended during seminars the past two summers, a beginner can use the same teaching techniques as a 10-year veteran.

Eventually, Trockman said, the center may be able to produce small, individual take-home books for youngsters — to move learning beyond the classroom.

Features

The Instructional Materials Center of the Minneapolis public schools system has taken on a job that formerly fell to the teacher—making educational aids such as flash cards and alphabet games. Directed by Mitchell Trockman, the center's work is helping to standardize reading programs in inner-city elementary schools. ● Page 21.

New York Jets quarterback Joe Namath, realizing that his pro football career is wholly dependent on a pair of rather questionable knees, discusses what he